

Board of Health Grants VSH Conditional License

On December 14, the Vermont Board of Health granted Vermont State Hospital a conditional, 6-month license for the period beginning January 1. The VSH must report biweekly on a number of issues, a list of which the Board is compiling. Health Department officials will cooperate with the reporting requirements and will post the reports on the department's website. Minutes of the Board of Health meeting are posted on the Mental Health Update web page under this week's Update.

VDH Accepts FAHC Recommendations for VSH

The Health Department last month accepted recommendations by FAHC for improving standards at Vermont State Hospital. The recommendations are posted on the Mental Health Update web page under the November 4 Update. The letter of response is posted on the Mental Health Update web page under this week's Update.

New Safety Inspection Planned for VSH

Former JCAHO surveyor Carroll A. Ockert, MHA, LFAHCE, of Shelburne, has agreed to survey safety conditions at Vermont State Hospital for a second time and to issue a report on recent improvements and on any new or continuing hazards. Ockert surveyed the hospital on April 8, 2005 and his report on that survey is posted on the Mental Health Update web page under the April 29, 2005 Update. Details of the second review are being worked out.

VSH Treatment Review Panel Issues Report

The Treatment Review Panel has issued its third annual report based on independent review of the use of involuntary procedures at the Vermont State Hospital. The report is posted on the Mental Health Update web page.

DOJ Negotiations Near Completion

Attorneys involved in the State's negotiations with the Department of Justice believe that acceptance of a draft memorandum of agreement is nearing, although the time requirements for the Department of Justice's internal approval process is not known. The Health Department continues addressing the problems that are expected to be referenced in the agreement.

Howland Joins Futures Initiative

John Howland Jr. has joined the Vermont Mental Health Futures Initiative, assisting the director, Beth Tanzman. Howland has been an aide to two health commissioners, was acting director of the Medical Practice Board, and has served as both deputy state auditor and deputy secretary of state. He has graduate degrees in English from Middlebury College and the University of Virginia and is a former newspaperman. His email is howland@vdh.state.vt.us.

Futures: BGS Selects Architecture+ for Inpatient Work

The Commissioner of Buildings & General Services has accepted the recommendation of an advisory committee and awarded a contract to Architecture+ (“Architecture Plus,” www.aplususa.com) of Troy, NY, for preliminary work on the new inpatient services recommended by the Futures Group. Representatives of the firm begin meeting with state and FAHC representatives next week. The scope of services, a tentative timeline and similar information is set out in the RFP, posted on the Mental Health Update web page under the November 11 Update. Some modifications to the timeline are anticipated.

Futures: Burlington City Council To Be Briefed on Inpatient Proposal

Burlington City Council members have invited state and FAHC representatives to appear before the council later this month or in early February to introduce the Futures proposal for inpatient services at or near FAHC. The date of the presentation is under discussion.

Futures: Actuarial Services Proposals To Be Reviewed

Consultants submitting proposals to provide actuarial services to help determine needed bed capacity for adult psychiatric inpatient services to replace the Vermont State Hospital have a Monday deadline. An ad hoc bid selection committee will meet on January 17 to review the proposals. The selection process is confidential and the meeting is closed, although the contract will be public after it is signed. Invited advisory committee members include Susan Besio or designee, AHS; Donna Jerry, BISHCA; Robert Pierattini, FAHC/UVM; Nick Emlen or designee, VCDMHS; Anne Donahue, Counterpoint; Brendan Hogan, OVHA; Bea Grausse, VAHHS, and Paul Blake, Dave Cote, Beth Tanzman, John Howland, John Pandiani and Bill McMains, Vermont Department of Health. The RFP for the contract is posted on the Mental Health Update web page under the November 11 Update.

Futures: NKHS Looks at Greensboro

Northeast Kingdom Human Services is pursuing its interest in locating sub-acute services at the former Lakeview Inn in Greensboro. Discussions are in the very early stages and NKHS continues to monitor an alternative location in Concord.

Futures: Vergennes To Vote on Proposal

Following a controversial City Council resolution in opposition to a proposed sub-acute facility in Vergennes, city officials have reopened debate on the issue by placing the question on the March ballot. Attorneys for the sellers of the Briarwood Manor property and for Counseling Services of Addison County and Howard Center for Human Services continue discussions related to sale of the property and application for necessary permits.

Futures: Upcoming Meetings

- Sub Acute Rehabilitation & Secure Residential Work Group, Wednesday, January 11, 9–11 a.m., Medical Director’s Office, Vermont State Hospital, Waterbury. Open to the public.
- Clinical Care Management Work Group, Friday, January 13, 9–11 a.m., Conference Room 2, Central Vermont Hospital, Berlin. Open to the public.

- Futures Advisory Group Meeting, Monday, January 23, 2 – 4:30 p.m., Skylight Conference Room, Waterbury State Office Complex. Open to the public. Draft agenda:
 - Report from the Care Management Work Group: Discussion on recommendations for program design.
 - Peer Services Program Approach: Input, discussion, next steps.
 - Supported Housing Program Approach: Input, discussion, next steps.
 - Updates, discussion of next steps on crisis stabilization services.
 - Public comment (from time to time throughout the meeting)
- Inpatient Work Group (next meeting not yet scheduled)

VSH Census

The Vermont State Hospital census was 49 as of midnight Thursday night. The average census for the past 45 days was between 46 and 47.

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